

1540 AM

**W T K M**

FM 104.9

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March 15, 2004

Federal Communications Commission    cc: Localism Task Force, **RM 10803**  
Enforcement Bureau  
Technical and Public Safety Division  
445 12<sup>TH</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Interference to WTKM-FM signal by WEXT-104.7, licensed to Sturtevant WI

On March 1, 2004, WEXT began operating on their CP in a new location with increased power in Oak Creek, WI, a suburb of Milwaukee. At WTKM, we could tell immediately when they signed on by the barrage of phone calls to our station, and the flood of concerned listener calls, letters and e-mails hasn't stopped since.

We are a Class-A FM licensee, as are they, slightly short-spaced to each other on first adjacent frequencies. We expressed concern when the CP was granted, and expected problems in the far southeastern corner of our coverage area. We never would have predicted the interference from their signal would creep well into our primary coverage contour. Interference becomes obvious within 6 miles of the city of Hartford. About 12 miles southeast of the city, there are areas where the signal is almost completely blocked. The spatter from their signal on adjacent channels, 20 and 30 miles distant of their transmitter, is extreme and consistent.

In the 35 years that I have been involved with WTKM Radio, I have on several occasions witnessed the development of new nearby drop-in stations and have had to contend with loss of coverage area to a portion of our listening audience. However, this is by far the most blatant instance of overriding interference I've ever experienced. The outcry from our listeners has undoubtedly reached the Commission. The frustration on the part of my staff is so intense, one of them suggested we simply turn our license back into the FCC if nothing can be done about it. The ironic twist is that, in the FCC's interest of creating "greater diversification of programming and ownership" by reducing spacing requirements and allowing more drop-in stations, quite the opposite is occurring. With our unique format targeting 50+ listeners, who are severely under-served in this and many similar markets, and with local ownership, we continue to be squeezed by other multi-station, run-of-the-mill formatted stations.

In this instance, you have a station licensed to Sturtevant, Wisconsin that has moved more than 8 miles north of their city of license to capitalize on the Milwaukee market. There is little mystery as to how much involvement the station will now have in Sturtevant. That community loses, our listeners lose out, and Milwaukee gains yet another country music station. I find it interesting that the FCC has created an internal organization, "the Localism Task Force", to review broadcast localism, while many FCC actions actually frustrate attempts by some radio stations to create long-term broadcast localism.

If you would like any further documentation in the form of letters from listeners, or need any additional information from me, please do not hesitate to contact me. I respect and acknowledge the right for WEXT to operate on their adjacent frequency to WTKM, and to broadcast with a legally licensed location and power. I do not, however, see how the public interest is being served when that operation causes such severe interference to adjacent channels. Most of the experts I've talked to suggest I am just wasting time and money to expect some form of relief from these circumstances. Perhaps I have more trust in the conviction of the FCC to do the right thing in serving the interest of the radio listening public. I request that a formal license be denied to WEXT to continue operations according to their construction permit.

Thank you for your consideration and exploration of this problem for southeastern Wisconsin radio listeners,

Sincerely,

Scott A Lopas  
President / General Manager  
WTKM Radio  
Kettle Moraine Broadcasting Company, Incorporated

*We're **The Kettle Moraine** Broadcasting Company*